



**U.S. Department of Justice**

**Stephen J. Murphy  
United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Michigan**

*Suite 2001  
211 West Fort Street  
Detroit, Michigan 48226-3277  
Fax: (313) 226-3561*

**For Immediate Release:**

**Contact:** Gina Balaya (313) 226-9758

Apr 26, 2007

---

**EVENT: Sentencing**

**Defendant: Walter Steen**

**JACKSON HEWITT, H&R BLOCK TAX PREPARER PLEADS GUILTY TO TAX FRAUD**

---

A 49-year-old Detroit tax preparer who worked at Jackson Hewitt and H&R Block branches in Highland Park from 2001 to 2004 pled guilty to assisting in the preparation of false tax returns in federal court today, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Maurice Aouate, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation.

Walter Steen pled guilty before United States District Judge George Caram Steeh to the most serious count of a thirty-one-count indictment. Steen admitted that he altered taxpayers' returns by fabricating or inflating Schedule A deductions (e.g. charitable contributions, business expenses, medical and dental deductions), student loan interest, and exemptions. At sentencing, the government will seek restitution of the total tax loss attributable to defendant's fraud, which is at least \$105,649.

"Coming so soon after tax season, this guilty plea is a stark reminder of the need to

vigilantly enforce our tax laws," United States Attorney Murphy said.

"An abusive return preparer tries to convince the people that they have the skills to deceive the IRS, but this is far from the truth." said Aouate. "Filing a false return is a violation of the law."

Steen worked at Jackson Hewitt from 2002 to 2004 and at H&R Block in 2001. He also prepared tax returns at his own business, GWP Tax Service, in Detroit in 2005.

Assisting the preparation of a false tax return is punishable by a maximum sentence of 3 years' imprisonment and a fine of up to \$100,000. Pursuant to his plea agreement, the defendant is to be sentenced to a term between 18 and 24 months imprisonment. Sentencing is scheduled for August 2, 2007 at 2:00 p.m.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Leonid Feller.